

Santa Rosa County
Emergency Services Advisory Committee
July 16, 2008
2:00 p.m.
MINUTES

Members present:

Stephen Cozart
Joe Diamond
T.J. Doherty
Jason Kimbrell

Members absent:

Ryan Jenkins
Werner Panchenko

Staff present:

Brad Baker
Deb Grinde

Agenda approved as submitted for this meeting.

Minutes for meeting held on May 21, 2008 approved as drafted with no exceptions.

Persons to Appear

None

Reports and Statistics

Continue to have some minor program problems generating the Fire Department reports. Report for May is inaccurate. S. Cozart reviewed the reports covering the "No Response" statistics for the months of May and June 2008. The statistics are more than acceptable.

Lifeguard Response Statistics

S. Cozart informed this committee that Lifeguard's compliance for the months of May and June are within the contractual requirements. J. Kimbrell more specifically reviewed their response times and compliance statistics for the months of May and June 2008. He stated that Lifeguard is 100% compliant with the contractual requirements. They strive to improve their systems on a daily basis in order to make continual improvements to their call reliability.

R. Collins, Pace, FL

Mr. Collins stated that the response times compared to previous years is incredible. He believes that this committee should make the public aware of this performance and should also recognize the fire departments response performance.

B. Baker responded by stating that we are working on a schedule of public announcements which would include this type of recognition.

R. Collins suggested that it may be possible that arrangements could be made with the local newspaper to run updates as a regular column in the news. This feature could include articles about the individual departments, Lifeguard, Emergency Management, etc.

S. Cozart stated that this committee would not be responsible for disseminating this type of information but that possibly the PIO could make this type of arrangement.

J. Kimbrell stated that Lifeguard is currently providing a summary of specific performance areas e.g. response times, system resource utilization, QI, etc. that is published and available for viewing on the Lifeguard website...there is a link on the county website and is published monthly.

S. Cozart requested that J. Kimbrell provide D. Grinde with a copy to be included with this meeting's documentation.

R. Collins suggested again that a schedule be adopted such as January- Ambulance Report, February-Fire Dept. March-EOC, and repeat continually so that each agency would recur on a regular basis. Another example would be that the Emergency Management Dept. provides an article about Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT). This whole process would help to eliminate a lack of information to the citizens.

R. Collins also pointed out that some of the citizens do not know what the SUV units are and what they are used for.

J. Kimbrell would like any questions or inquiries about Lifeguard to contact him at Lifeguard Ambulance Services, 4340 Avalon Blvd., Milton, FL Phone: 983-3000 R. Collins believes that the inquiries should be coordinated through the Emergency Management Department.

Correspondence

None

Old Business

Fire Services Plan

B. Baker provided an update to purchases made for the fire departments. He stated that the loans have been secured and orders have been placed for five (5) pieces of fire apparatus. Two (2) bids were rejected and will be placed with state contractors in the future.

R. Collins, Pace, FL

Mr. Collins stated that he believes the public should be made aware of what is being purchased with the funding that was generated through their tax increases.

He believes that we should also explain that two (2) were rejected, the reasons for rejecting them and what the future plans are for purchases.

J. Diamond asked whether the vehicles will be outfitted with equipment. B. Baker stated that some will be outfitted.

New Business

Hurricane Preparedness Plan

T. J. Doherty had requested that this committee review a total expanse of emergency services; that is, more than just the medical and fire services. Since we did determine at our last meeting that we do have the authority to look at the totality of emergency services, the next step would be to determine what area or problem we might look at. An example would be communication interoperability between all agencies and determines if there are any glitches in that area.

Emergency Management would have to help us determine what the requirements would be. These are the types of topics T. Doherty thought this committee might address.

S. Cozart stated that he does not want this committee to duplicate the activities that the Disaster Manager's Group (DMG) is responsible for.

T. Doherty stated that the DMG is more of an internal, county employee type of group. B. Baker explained that other groups are also involved such as the municipalities, the Dept of Health, Sheriff's Office, American Red Cross, etc. He explained that there are many of the key EOC players but not necessarily all of them are county employees.

S. Cozart explained an agenda for the DMG meeting held 07/15/08 that was distributed to this committee. It provided an overview of what the meeting may consist of including topics and participants. This particular meeting's topic was provided by the Public Information Officer. It explained joint information centers, press releases, microphone use, what to expect in an aftermath, etc.

S. Cozart questioned whether there is one document that explains what should occur in the event of a disaster. B. Baker stated that Santa Rosa County does have a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). It is an all hazards plan and not just for weather events. It addresses all types of disaster events and is one document. The Emergency Support Functions (ESF) are established for any type of event.

T. Doherty does not believe this committee should be involved with that particular plan (CEMP). He does believe that this committee should check to make sure that, for instance, communications interoperability is effective and in place, that the utilization and management of volunteers is set up and administered correctly. He believes from personal experience that this area is transitional and should be looked at.

B. Baker said that he will be glad to research any areas that might require further development.

J. Diamond stated that many people are not aware of just what the EOC / Emergency Management team does on a regular basis. It may be that they need to provide this committee with a review of what they do accomplish.

T. Doherty explained that during a recent activity in Navarre (Fun Fest) a multi- agency plan was executed and it involved the Sheriff's Office, Lifeguard, the Fire Department and CERT. The end result was that different frequencies were utilized, some deputies did not know what frequency they should have been operating on and it was determined that there were holes in the plan. One deputy was not aware of what specific frequency they utilized.

B. Baker stated that there are ways to implement the interoperability. Those that were attempting to accomplish this connection should have contacted the Emergency Communications Center and they would have been able to make this happen. In addition, he explained that the county does have a Communications Committee in place that continues to look forward in that field. We have started a microwave study and will continue to be progressive in that area.

B. Baker explained that any time we are dealing with communications it is very expensive and explained some of the things that would need to be completed.

Communications Committee minutes should be forwarded to this committee.

R. Collins, Pace, FL

Mr. Collins acknowledged that the government cannot cover everything in every single situation. He proceeded to say that in the south end of the county a CERT team has been developed, throughout the county a new COAD group has been formed and in the south end there is a very successful Interfaith Ministries group established. He explained the functions of each of the different churches that operate as part of the Interfaith Ministries group. He questioned what type of communication arrangements would be established for these types of groups in our area.

B. Baker explained that we have a Citizens Information Center, we have a web page developed, we make use of the media throughout an event for broadcast arrangements, we have e-breaking news and we have a faith based data base developed for use by all of the churches in the area. Many churches in the area enter the types of resources that they can support into the data base. They meet on a regular basis and will have a representative in the EOC during activations.

R. Collins questioned whether the faith based organizations will be able to communicate with the EOC during any type of disaster that might eliminate types of normal communication lines. B. Baker responded by stating that there is some personal responsibility required in that we have asked people to prepare themselves for the first 72 hours. We will not be providing radios to the churches; it will be their responsibility to let us know what information we need to disseminate.

T. Doherty explained that Gulf Breeze took legislative action to create an interfaith volunteer operation (based out of St. Ann's). It is a disaster faith based group of volunteers from different denominational churches in the area. The key to the citizens is getting the information to the citizens. We need to assure and know how the dissemination of the information to the public will

be managed. One of the issues raised during Hurricane Ivan was the fact that information regarding other counties was being disseminated; information regarding Santa Rosa County did not seem to be available.

The C.E.R.T. team in Navarre is utilizing ham radios in order to communicate with the EOC; they are using flyers, etc. He said that he understood the state would take over any electronic message boards in the area during a disaster.

That has not been validated. B. Baker will look into this matter.

R. Collins requested that he would like the documentation regarding the legislative action taken for creating this delegation.

T. Doherty stated that Gulf Breeze has their own EOC and other areas must depend on the county for these things.

S. Cozart asked whether, if the land line is lost during a disaster, the communications within the county would be drastically affected. B. Baker stated that we do have back up plans in place, a back up tower, contingency plans, etc.

The main channel is dependent on the phone lines though. Our capabilities would not be as strong. The computer department will assure that the county network and EOC network is functioning. There is a backup server at the EOC and one off site. T. Doherty would like to know where the back up server is located. Power problems will hinder citizens from accessing the internet. B. Baker stated that the plan includes both television and radio imbedding at the EOC.

Discussion by the committee ensued emphasizing the fact that with enough warning citizens should take steps to be prepared for storms, that preparation by individuals is critical.

T. Doherty stated that there will be a C.E.R.T. training class to be held starting Aug 21.

S. Cozart questioned what action this committee should be taking in regard to this issue.

T. Doherty suggested that this committee address disaster preparedness as an agenda item at each meeting. The committee could be prepared to discuss an individual topic for each upcoming meeting. He provided an example in the aspect of volunteer utilization and management during a disaster. This would include both planned for and spontaneous volunteers.

R. Collins, Pace, FL

Mr. Collins suggested that this is a good idea and could be expounded on by publishing the subject matter prior to the meetings. There are many people who might have something to add to the meetings such as retirees, etc. Veterans also have experience in many of these areas and could lend themselves to these programs.

S. Cozart indicated that this committee will cover that subject at our next meeting. T. Doherty will compile a list of suggested topics that can be reviewed regularly. J. Kimbrell suggested that this particular (hurricane) season will provide many different topics. He believes that communications should be at the top of the list priority wise. It was agreed that communications is extremely important.

R. Collins

explained the workings of a committee recently formed at his church. It was determined that you need to know who your neighbors are but you also need to know where they are. He proceeded to explain the system he used to create a method of tracking the members of his church. Discussion ensued regarding how this might succeed within the county.

S. Cozart stated that he believes that everyone has both personal and community responsibilities as citizens; citizens cannot wait for the government to do everything for us!

D. Grinde, staff, suggested that a tour of the EOC be scheduled for this committee in order to gain a better understanding of what actually takes place upon activations.

S. Cozart will look into the recording and publication requirements for the meeting to take place at the EOC.

T. Doherty clarified the fact that the new COAD group is not only in the south end of the county. It includes many organizations and agencies throughout the county.

Public Forum

R. Collins, Pace, FL

R. Collins presented a question from a local website, Santa Rosa Forum. It was specifically directed to Lifeguard. The question was in regard to Lifeguard's policy on transporting patients; more specifically when a guardian might refuse the transport and/or the guardian requests that the patient be taken specifically to a local medical center.

J. Kimbrell explained the policy in great length. Discussion ensued.

S. Cozart requested that this type of specific inquiry be taken directly to Lifeguard as this committee is not the forum for this discussion.

R. Collins presented more questions regarding the operations of Lifeguard Ambulance Service. One question was regarding requests to Santa Rosa County for subsidies. The other question was regarding the recording of phone calls between Lifeguard employees and ECC dispatchers.

S. Cozart determined that these particular discussions are not appropriate for this committee meeting. In the future, specific questions of this type will be presented to the chairperson and then forwarded to the appropriate speaker if necessary.

Ruling from the chair is that all questions to the panel need to be addressed to the chair and the chair will make a determination whether or not the question will be open to discussion by this committee.

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 pm.

Next meeting date and time will be: Wednesday, September 17, at 2:00 PM